

Statement of the Slovak Republic delivered at the 71st meeting of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee

Dear Mr. Chair, esteemed members of the Compliance Committee, secretariat, communicants, and observers.

First of all, we would like to express our thanks for organizing this videoconference related to the Decision VI/8i. We would also like to use this opportunity to express our appreciation for a constructive cooperation with the Committee and its secretariat.

The Slovak Republic, as a Party to the Aarhus Convention, has been continuously trying to implement the pillars and provisions of the Aarhus Convention into its legal framework to the fullest extent possible. This applies also to the recommendations of the Compliance Committee interpreting and applying the provisions of the Aarhus Convention in specific contexts, such as the Decision VI/8i. The Nuclear Regulatory Authority and the Ministry of Environment have cooperated closely in order to address the Committee's recommendations in the pertinent matter.

The Slovak Republic has always sent documents and reports required by the Compliance Committee and the secretariat in a timely manner. The final Progress Report was forwarded on October 1, 2020, It describes all steps taken by the Slovak Republic in relation to the Decision VI/8i. We have also tried to react promptly and proactively to any additional queries from the Committee and to any new developments in the case. We welcome that the Committee has also recognized our proactive approach in its draft report.

Based on the Decision VI/8i and the recommendations of the Committee, the Nuclear Regulatory Authority has amended the Directive on Sensitive Information. The new wording in the amended version of the directive was drafted specifically to implement the requirements of Art. 4 (4) and Art. 4 (6) of the Aarhus Convention in the text of the directive, which is in line with the Committee's recommendations. We welcome that the Committee has evaluated these amendments positively in its draft report and that it considers them as sufficient to meet the requirements of para. 2 of the Decision VI/8i.

Even though the Committee in its draft report mentions that it will not assess the amendments of the Atomic Act concerning telecommunications and postal secrets, we would nevertheless like to inform the Committee that the amendment to the Atomic Act, focusing *inter alia* on the removal of the contested reference to telecommunications and postal secrets from the text of the Atomic Act, was approved by the National Council of the Slovak Republic in the first

reading on June 29, 2021. Hence, this amendment will move to the next stages of the legislative process and it is probable that it will be adopted.

This legislative process was also initiated as a reaction to the recommendations made by the Committee in its 2nd Progress Review. Hence, it demonstrates the genuine efforts of the Slovak republic to implement the recommendations of the Committee and, in this way, to bring its legal framework in compliance with the Aarhus Convention.

Finally, we would like to thank the Committee for its guidance that enabled us to make the necessary steps to meet the requirements of the Decision VI/8i.

Thank you for your attention.